on which the fort stood was made when she was a member of the Confederacy of which that Government was the common agent, and that, she having now withdrawn from the association, the land must, by public law, revert to her. At the same time, she was willing to pay whatever might be found due from her. His letter was clear and forcible, and from his point of view, unanswerable. The Secretary of War, Mr. Holt, to whom Mr. Buchanan entrusted the correspondence, protested in his reply[1] against the charge of unfriendliness towards South Carolina; he even stated that the purpose of holding the fort was to protect the harbor against a foreign attack. But he utterly refused to give any consideration at all to the demand for the surrender of the post, and reiterated the right and intention of the Government to supply and reinforce the garrison whenever the administration might think it in need of either reinforcements or supplies.

It cannot be pretended that Mr. Holt's letters' were as frank, or as clear as to the purposes of tte Government which he represented, as were those of Colonel Hayne in respect to the position of South Carolina. The Secretary probably did not care to speak with absolute frankness. Perhaps he was afraid that to do so would precipitate the

explosion which he and the President were so anxious, if possible, to avoid, or at least to defer, until the next administration should come into power. We never

[1] I W. R., 166.
[2] Reference is here made also to his letter to Senators Fitzpatrick, Mallory, and Slidell; I W. R., 149.